A

SERMON

Preach'd at the

FUNERAL

OF

John Melford, Esq;

Of *Nymet Episcopi*, in the Diocess of *Exeter.*

Who dyed (aged eighteen years) the 21st day of *June*, through the sad occasion of a fall from a Horse; and was buried at *Southmolton* the 27th day of the same month, 1692.

By *Tho. Easton*, A. M. Vicar of *Nymet Episcopi.*

St. Luk. 13. 2, 3, 4, 5.

The Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their Sacrifices; and those eighteen that were slain at Siloam were not sinners above all others.

Therefore Doctrinally,

Strange Judgments don't always infallibly denote the sufferers to be extraordinary guilty.

Non Laudem quæras; potius sed sustine famam.
Immeritam famam despice: Disce pati.

LONDON, Printed for *Tho. Bennet* at the *Half-Moon* in St. *Paul's* Church-yard, 1692.

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The PREFACE.

THE following Sermon was preach'd at the Funeral of a young Gentleman whom I dearly loved: and it was never antecedently intended to be made more publick than at the time of its delivery at the interment: But the misinterpretations that have been put upon it by some, and the various reports that have ſprang from thence by others, have neceſſitated me to do what I never thought: And I am rather willing to ſubmit the whole to a Publick cenſure, than that I ſhould lye under the ſuſpicion of abuſing the credit of the deceaſed Gentleman, or be guilty of that unpardonable Rudeneſs, of deſignedly blaming the Conduct and Guidance of his ſurviving Friends, which the uncertain Reports that I have met withal ſince the Funeral, do ſo plainly intimate. For I reckon now the noiſe is ſpread ſo far, that thoſe who know nothing of this diſcourſe, but only by bare report, and that too not begun or propagated upon ſubſtantial grounds, but as Miſtake or Humor gave them firſt riſe and vent, they would have preſumed me guilty of all that I am accuſed, if I ſhould decline this honeſt and ſafeſt way of a Juſtification.

I confeſs 'tis no great wonder if Offences happen; but yet it behoveth all men to ſee, that they be not occaſionleſs: In this particular, I have ſufficient reaſon to ſay, that it is not thro my fault, if any are offended: 'tis to be attributed to ſome other original than the following Diſcourſe.

St. Paul complained, and thought it a very hard caſe, that he ſhould be accounted an Enemy to the Galatians for telling them the Truth, Gal. 4. 16 (i. e.) 'twas very unjuſt, that they ſhould be wroth with the Apoſtle for ſpeaking Truth tho it were harſh, and they fell under the inevitable Laſh of a ſevere Conviction.—But MINE is a WORSE caſe, (i. e.) the cauſe of my being accounted an Enemy (if I am ſo accounted) is not equally manifeſt with that of the Apoſtles; for he had taxed them of tranſgreſſion in particular Duties, and made the application of his reproof to particular perſons, and for this the offenders againſt the Rules of Chriſtianity were offended with the Apoſtle, that preacht it to them.—Had I done ſo, I confeſs, it might

have been a cauſe in ſome meaſure plauſible to juſtify ſome ſevere demonſtrations of Anger, and an evil Reſentment. But even by Confeſſion *nothing is* poſitive, *only what is here mentioned is liable to misconſtructions; and "Thoſe that don't know the circumſtances of the ſad "miſchance of this Gentlemans Death will be apt to aſcribe it to a* then *"preſent Intemperance.—But if that could have ſilenced this Controverſy, or allayed this Heat, I* then *did, and now do* declare, *I was perſonally with him (within one hour) and neither his Relations, or myſelf, or other Friends could in the leaſt ſuſpect it.*

But if other inferences may be drawn from ſo plain a Diſcourſe, whatever their tendency may be, or allowing them to indifferent ſuppoſitions, and ſo by conſequence may afford ſome ungrateful Concluſions; I hope no good man, nor no wiſe man will ſay, that I *am* chargeable *with all that* Jarrago *of Inferences, that either Wit or Malice, Ignorance or Curioſity may gather thence. My aim was not (God is Judge and Witneſs) to make ſcandalous reflections upon paſt actions, for I declare I know nothing whereof to accuſe; but I thought, conſidering my method of diſcourſe, what I ſaid was* fairly *deduceable from the words; and if I have been* particular *in the directions, I am ſure I was* deſignedly *general in the reproof.*

And that all thoſe that ſhall pleaſe to condeſcend ſo far, as to give this little piece an indifferent *reading, and afterward what* cenſure *they pleaſe, may know fully and plainly the reaſon why 'twas publiſhed, and judge from thence, whether there were any need of Jealouſy or Diſcontent, which hath occaſioned ſo wide and common reports; I have offered it to your view exactly in the* ſame *Method and Language that 'twas firſt written, without ſo much as* altering *a ſentence, ſcarce a* ſingle *word; (excepting only that in the repetition of ſome remarkable Sentences, there might poſſibly be ſome accidental Tranſpoſition.) And if the publication of it, may, upon ſecond thoughts with deliberate peruſal, ſatisfy thoſe who are particularly concerned in the ſad occaſion of the Funeral, (that here are no particular Reprehenſions) if it may have a favourable approbation from men unprejudiced; if it may any way tend to the Reformation of any Perſon, that ſo God may have the* Glory, *when* theſe, *or* any *of them happen, with the glory of* God attending *them, I have my only aim, and beyond thoſe I wiſh no more.*

Pſalm

PSALM CIII. 15, 16.

As for man his days are as graſs; as a flower of the field ſo he flouriſheth;
For the wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it no more.

AMong all the troubles to which we are ſubjected as we are *men*, and which we have drawn upon our ſelves as we are *ſinners*, none is ſo dreadful as *death*: the thoughts of being *removed* from this preſent place of abode to another ſtate, have deep impreſſions upon our Spirits, and they alſo very melancholy and *diſtracting*; and eſpecially the more afflicting, when we find the events of ſuch conſiderations to affect *our ſelves*, (i. e.) if we loſe a *Friend*, we are grieved: But if we apprehend Death calling for us in *particular*, it chills our Blood, and caſts a Damp upon our Courage. Mirth and Jollity are neglected as inſignificant and *unſatisfactory*; and infinitely various ſurmiſes do mutually diſturb our incompoſed Senſes; ſo much that under the fears of *approaching* Death, we loſe the very advantages of *Life*.

And this *natural* averſion that all men have to dying, or a final diſſolution, is mightily augmented by *collateral* cauſes, *v. gr.*

1. Some are extreamly *fond* of this World. They are here (as they think) well at eaſe, they have all that they can *need*, and that makes them ſuppoſe, and believe, 'tis all

all that they ought to *wiſh* for; and therefore, *here* they reſolve to fix their Tabernacles; and in this Region of *reputed* Felicity, they would willingly *continue* a long time, (at leaſt) and for *ever* if 'twere poſſible.

Hence therefore ſome are unwilling to dye, becauſe they muſt by that be *deprived* of all thoſe delightful Objects, and ſtript of all thoſe conveniences, in which they at preſent find ſo much *Comfort*.

2. Some are afraid to dye (or unwilling at leaſt) and they are ſuch, as have not the advantages of the former, but yet have ſome *tolerable* conveniences, and enough to *counterbalance* all their Troubles or Miſeries in the worſt ſenſe, and many pleaſant *intervals* of Comfort; And they never conſidered enough of a *future* ſtate, to think whether there might be any thing *better* in another world, and therefore they would not leave this for an *Uncertainty*.

If they have the miſhap to meet with troubles, yet they are not *laſting*, and a new Enjoyment *wears* off the memory of a late bad accident—But now, if they ſhould be *diſplaced* from ſuch a ſtate, whoſe circumſtances they have ſo long reviewed, examined and approved, and immediately be lodged in another Region, with which they are utterly *unacquainted*, this would be ſuch an *aſtoniſhing* thought, as the moſt rigid Stoick with all his Philoſophy, could not eaſily *mitigate*, and the Venom of it would work ſo powerfully, that in a little time it would draw on that *very* evil which their fear was intend to *prevent*.

3. Others are afraid to dye, from the remembrance of an *ill-ſpent* Life; they are men who have lived in an open Rebellion againſt that ſacred Majeſty which governs the Univerſe, but eſpecially *inhabiteth* Eternity; but yet have not lived ſo long, or ſinned ſo *much*, as to wear out all *Senſe* of a Deity, or eraſe the *natural* Apprehenſions of good and evil. But their memory is tenacious enough to mind them of *what* they did; and

their

their Conſcience tells them what *owns*, when done; and when upon a review of their paſt actions, they can only draw *a ſad* Catalogue of Error and Folly, or wilful Tranſgreſſion, and repeated diſobedience, and yet at the ſame time their own hearts tell them, that thoſe faults muſt be *accounted* for to a Soveraign Judge, who is infinitely juſt, and will neither be byaſſed or perſwaded to paſs any ſentence upon any Perſon, otherwiſe than the *Merits* of his Actions ſhall require: When by looking backward, he ſhall ſee little or nothing that he dares *own*, and yet looking forward, he can have no proſpect of any thing that he would willingly *ſuffer*; in a word, where there is no remaining *hope* of any thing, but a fearful looking for of *Judgment*, 'tis in this caſe no *wonder* if men be unwilling to dye; for to ſuch men death is only an *inlet* to damnation; which is the moſt amazing conſideration that can be, next to the being in *actual* torment.

But yet I ſay, if there were none of theſe *accidental* reaſons to bring men out of love with death, yet even that principle of *ſelf-preſervation*, which is connatural with our being, would engage us to uſe all poſſible lawful means for our continuance here in this ſtate and condition.

'Tis true, an *active* faith, a firm hope, and an ardent love, will ſuperſede all natural or accidental *objections*: and the zeal of a ſound *Religion* will prompt a man to hazard his life unto the Death, as *Act.* 21. 13. ſays St. *Paul*, What mean ye to weep, and to break my heart, I am ready not only to be *bound*, but to *Dye* for the Name of the Lord Jeſus? — And the vaſt number of Martyrs, that have ſo *willingly* ſubmitted to the Tyranny of Perſecutors, doth fully convince us, that many in the World did not think life the moſt *valuable* bleſſing.

But yet ordinarily ſpeaking, this willingneſs to lay down our lives, tho for Religions ſake, is a ſort of *Violence* to our natural temper and conſtitution: and 'tis what no

one can, and would do, if he were not first perfectly *transformed*, and altered from what he was; Nay, in short, this natural aversion that is lodged in the very original of our frame is abundantly manifest in that petition of our *Saviour* himself, *Jo.* 12. 27. *Father save me from this hour, but for this cause came I unto this hour*: (*i.e.*) the terrible apprehensions of his approaching passion, did so *dismay* him, that tho he came into the World on purpose to suffer, yet he desired, that if *possible* it might be passed by: *Mat.* 26. 39. *Let this cup pass from me*, or at least that the time might be *deferred*—for we are so *partial* to our selves, and so fond of our Ease, that an Evil which we *fear*, is as pungent as that which we really *feel*. And we have been told of some who have made their lives extreamly *miserable*, only by antedating their misery, and suspecting that in time they *might be* so.

I don't mean that *this* respected our Saviour, for he foreknew all consequences, and he knew that he should *rise* again, and be glorified at the right hand of God: But this respects *men*, who can see no *further* than to what is before them.

But yet what *Notions* soever men may have of things, what projects soever may *divert* them, what thoughts to *distract* them, or what *care* soever they use for their Preservation, certain it is, that no man can continue long in *this* World: Our fears in *this* life don't set the *other* life at a greater distance; nor do our enjoyments here give us a surer *Inheritance* in this Life; but whatever our worldly circumstances are, our time here is but, and can but be *short*, for as for man *his days are as grass*, &c. *p.* 1.

To collect and repeat to you the various Epithets and Emblems, by which the Writers of all ages have represented the Shortness and Uncertainty of our Life, is not so very material: The *Ægyptians* had their Hieroglyphicks, and the other Heathen their Maxims, and the Scriptures have their Allusions and Parables, their Representations

and

and Similitudes; but I will go no further than the *Text*, which is very ſutable to the ſad occaſion of our preſent meeting.

Mans Life is as graſs.] The *Seaſon* of the year tells us, how ſoon it is withered, that which is green and proſperous in the morning, and but lately refreſhed by a gentle Dew from the kind Heavens, is e're noon, cut down, and by Night utterly altered from what it was; the Verdure of it is gone, and no Art can *recover* it again. So the *Flowers* of the field are beauteous and gay, more gorgeous than *Solomon* in all his Glory, *Mat.* 6. 29. and yet as ſoon as they are pluckt from their Stalk, they begin to *fade*, and in a very little time degenerate into a *loathſom* Rottenneſs.—Nay, which is ſeemingly a leſs cauſe for any conſiderable alteration, the very Temperature of the Heavens, if but a little *unſeaſonable*, robs both Graſs and Flowers of their *Beauty*; a rough wind, or a great rain makes *both* to fade; and after *Once* ſuch an accident happens, it is for ever irremediable, *and the Place thereof ſhall know it no more*] (i. e.) they never grow in the ſame place, nor recover their loſt *Excellency*.

And ſuch are the days of man; *as for man his days are as Graſs.*] Man is weak and helpleſs, *born to trouble as the Sparks fly upward*, Job. 5. 7 (*i. e.*) by a *natural* and unavoidable Tendency. And yet not ſo *continually* vexed by croſs misfortunes, but there is *enough* in life to deſerve *Commendation*, and to cauſe a moderate *content*: As we rejoyce to ſee a *flouriſhing* Meadow, though within few days, we reſolve to ſtrip it of its pleaſant Verdure; or as we *admire* a pretty Flower, though within a ſhort time that we have handled it, we are ſenſible that its *Fragrancy* will decay inſenſibly.—So in our *Life* there are *many* things which are pleaſant and delectable, but their continuance is *uncertain*; ten thouſand accidents may ſpoil a *great* Fortune; or a ſudden and unthought of miſchance may nip our blooming *hopes*, and in ſuch a time as all

things promiſe fair, there may happen (unawares) a ſudden change, which ſhall *alter* the Scene, as much as cutting a Meadow, or plucking a Flower, cauſes an alteration in thoſe refreſhing Objects.

But then the parallel is not altogether alike in all points; but with reſpect to man there is ſomething of a *tranſcendency*. Mans days and all worldly *advantages*, are here but of a *ſhort* date, and uncertain continuance, ſo *far* therefore like graſs or a flower. But further *unlike* to either, for they as ſoon as they are corrupted, *return* again to their firſt nothing, but man can never ſuffer an *Annihilation*; The place of a man ſhall know him no more, (*i.e.*) a man can never live a *ſecond* time in this world; but there is an everlaſting duration reſerved for all men in the *next*: And how fading ſoever *temporal* advantages may appear, certain it is, the ſubſequent ſtate can admit of no *alteration*: the latter is a matter of *faith*, the former is the ſubject of frequent *experience*. Mans life, or his days are as graſs.

It was long ſince ſaid *Pſal.* 90. 10. the age of man is threeſcore years and ten, which comparatively to what men lived before the flood, may very properly be ſaid to be but as an *hand breadth*, *Pſal.* 39. 5. But yet even this *ſhort* period is but *rarely* attained, where *one* is permitted to *conflict* with the troubles and inconveniences of old age, ten are cut off, or taken away in the midſt of their days, *Pſal.* 102. 24. Or yet, if all could be ſuppoſed to come to the utmoſt *deſirable* period of an old age, with the concurrent advantages of eaſe, peace and honour, yet even ſtill their days would be like the *graſs*; For we know by Experience, that the Graſs which we *reſerve* for Winter, is mightily *defaced* by a bluſtering North-Eaſt wind, and what remains uneaten by Cattle, is trodden under foot, and by the return of the following Spring is all *rotten*. And ſo—the oldeſt age will come to a *bound* which it ſhall not paſs over; for *one* day muſt be the

the *laſt* to every body. And our reſidence here below, being only among ſuch objects as are *various* and mutable, we do by a ſympathy partake of their Nature, ſo far, as to be neceſſarily ſubject to the ſame *Inconveniences*.

'Tis true there are *different* diſtances of time when theſe things happen, but that is but as 'tis in all *mutable* things; ſome Flowers are very *forward*, but thoſe as ſoon decay, others are later, e're they ſhow their Splendor, and they accordingly *continue* longer.

But then 'tis not only a *natural* decay or fading, which will one time or other infallibly attend them, which ſhows their mutability, but there is ſometimes a force, and *violence* committed, and a rough ſtorm, or but an *unwary* touch, may cauſe them to ſink into nothing, *ſooner* than elſe they would: in ſuch a caſe *nature* is injured, and precipitated into an *irreverſible* ruine. And in this caſe *too*, mans days are as graſs: 'Tis terrible to think, (and I am ſorry 'tis the preſent caſe) how many have been *cruſht* into their Graves by *ſurprizing* accidents.

How (ſeemingly) inconſiderable evils have produced *diſmal*, and yet *laſting* effects; how many children have been left *Orphans*, and how many women *Widows*, and how many parents have been deprived of hopeful and beloved *Children*, even by ſuch ſad caſualties, as it lay not in mans power to foreſee or *prevent*. Our own *perſonal* knowledge too fully aſſures us of this truth, and yet reports bring multiplied inſtances of ſuch woful miſhaps.

Thoſe that have been well in the *morning*, and as promiſing as a *Flower*, have like a Flower (e're night) been utterly *diſrobed* of all their Beauty; when all our hopes and *expectations*, all our future comforts, and preſent *ſatisfaction*, have in one inſtant been *ſupplanted*, and all poſſibility of looking for the ſame hath for ever been *taken* from us. The days of man *are but as graſs, he flouriſheth like a Flower of the Field*.

I am ſorry I muſt, (and I crave leave and the allowance of thoſe who are moſt intimately concerned in our preſent loſs, that I may; and I pray that it may not add *new* ſupplies to that ſorrow which is already as *great* as ſo ſad an occaſion can *deſerve*, only let it not be more exceſſive than Nature can *ſupport*, or Religion *juſtify*) I am ſorry that I muſt ſay, that this preſent Text hath now a very full and *parallel*, tho a very *fatal* completion.

This Gentleman was like a *flower* of the field (*i. e.*) he wanted nothing that might render him *amiable*, he had multiplied *advantages* both natural and accidental; *v. gr.* a good apprehenſion with a judgment equal to his years: and was very promiſing of being very *ſerviceable* in his Country, for which he was well capacitated by a plentiful *Eſtate*. And to procure him a publick reſpect in the *world*, he had the Honor and Happineſs to be deſcended from two very *Worthy* Families, of a truly *gentile* extraction, as well as an antient *deſcent*; (tho I would not inſiſt much upon that, leſt I ſhould be thought to flatter thoſe that are alive, and yet I ought not wholly to omit it.)

The *Honor* of Parents doth eaſily *procure* a general reputation to their Poſterity: and where there is an Eſtate proportionable to *maintain* that Character, ſuch men are both *lov'd and fear'd*; which are two advantages, whereby a good rich Gentleman may do abundance of *good*: and ſuch a man's *example* would effectually commend Religion, to the general approbation and choice of his Neighbours, who in ſpight of *Precepts* live by Example.

He had alſo the conſtant and uninterrupted aſſurances of Love and Kindneſs from a tender Mother, and affectionate Siſters; as well as the general reſpects of all thoſe who had the Happineſs to be at all acquainted with him. In a word, he had that *double* happineſs the Poet wiſhed for, (*i. e.*) a ſound mind in a ſound body. Thus was he like a *Flower*, and indeed of as *fair* a figure as moſt of theſe adjacent parts.

But

But alas! What did all theſe *ſignify*? He is cut *down* like a flower, and his days were but as the graſs: *One* ſtorm, one little accident hath rendred all theſe advantages *uſeleſs*.

His *Eſtate* is left behind him; his Anceſtors are *no more* to be accounted to him, now that he is laid with them in the *Duſt*: and of all his *Friends* (tho they all lament his Death, yet) none can *relieve* him.

All our moſt pious reſpects to our *deareſt* Friends are ſuperfluous, as ſoon as the Soul is *parted* from the body; and tho Nature, and Civility, and Religion allow and command, that we perform the *charitable* Office of a Burial; Yet Reaſon, and Senſe, and Prudence, and Religion tell us, that the *paſſionate* demonſtrations of kindneſs, which the tenderneſs of the Female Sex doth eaſily afford, as well as the nearneſs of the Relation doth ſo readily prompt, are neither *juſtifiable* nor commendable.

I will lament my Friend, as I am a *man*, but yet not ſo, as thereby to give the world any temptation to ſuſpect that I am no *Chriſtian*. I may be *ſorry* for the loſs of my Friend; but I muſt take care that I be not ſorry as if I had *no Hope*. Nature forces me to *grieve*: but Religion ſhall give it its *juſt* Limits, that my grief may not be inordinate.

And ſince the all-wiſe God hath been pleaſed at this *ſtrange* rate, to cut off this young Gentleman, juſt as we do the tender graſs, ſince he who was a *flower* for his many deſireable *qualifications*, is alſo like a flower *withered*; I adviſe, that all that hear of this *dreadful* accident, do think upon it for their *improvement* in Holineſs.

Many men are ſo fond, as, at any extraordinary accident to attempt to meaſure Providence; and caſt about them, to ſee, where ſhould be the *cauſe* of the *great* thing that God hath done. The Diſciples themſelves were not free of this fault: *Jo.* 9. 2. *Maſter, who did ſin, this man or his parents, that he was born* blind? But this is a *fallible*,

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and withal a presumptious way to judge of the methods of Gods Providence: Certain we are (or we are *Atheists*) that God hath a *determinate* end, in all things that happen in this lower world; but it is not proper for us, that we should be able to *square* his Providence with the various *chances* of the world: It rather obliges us to *adore* his goodness, in preserving us, and his mercy in sparing us; and that *we* who are as much grass (*i. e.*) as frail, and equally mortal as this young Gentleman, should yet be continued *alive*, when he is denied the further Priviledge.

And therefore to make this Text, and this particular instance of Providence serviceable to us, I shall infer these four things.

1. *That we do not value our selves too much, upon what we have.*

2. *That we do not too much addict our selves to this world.*

3. *That we make a seasonable preparation for a removal hence.*

4. *That we moderate our sorrow for the loss of any Friend, how near or hopeful soever.*

These are all naturally contained in the premises, and these may be beneficial to the rectifying our *mistakes*, concerning the *odds* betwixt this and the other world; for 'tis too often seen, that those who have *most* of this world, are too regardless of the next, and don't dream of a change that may *ensue*.

Inf. 1. First, We should not too much *value* our selves upon what we have. All the valuable blessings or conveniences of this life, are subject to *change* and casualties: nothing here below is permanent and lasting. All *animate* beings are useless and contemptible, as soon as their breath is gone; and the most solid inanimate bodies, do by

by *degrees* decay, and grow unfaſhionable: Marble is defaced by weather, and Silver and Gold will ruſt: but if this were not ſo, yet we ſhould not value them *much*, becauſe they can't long be ſerviceable to us, for we can't live *long* to enjoy them.

In *Infancy* we are *careleſs* of thoſe things, that we eſteem moſt precious in common eſtimate (in older age.) A new born Babe hath no *comfort* from a large inheritance, nor doth the care and labour of *buſie* anceſtors, who heap'd up wealth like the ſand, to leave their poſterity a *luxuriant* fortune, at all *affect* them: But all that they need is a *careful* Nurſe and good attendance; and if they are ſo happy as to enjoy *theſe*, they never project any thing *future* for twelve or fourteen years next to come: And after that age, it may be, the *flattery* and information of ſome indigent or ſpungy dependents, ſhall *ſwell* a wealthy young heir with mountainous thoughts of incredible Riches, which are his undoubted right, and of which he can't be deprived; and from thence (it may be) he is hurried on to all thoſe *extravagancies*, which are laid as temptations to *pleaſure* by vaſſal confidents; till by *eaſie* degrees he becomes ungovernable, and moſtly licentious too: and many times thoſe malevolent inſinuations have cauſed *Minors* to turn Bankrupt, and even *forfeit* their Eſtates, before they had lived long enough to *enjoy* them. And hence it hath happened, that thoſe who had enough to live *creditably* with good management, and to *convey* to their Children a ſufficient fortune, have themſelves *caſtrated* their own Fortunes, and lived long enough to *lament* the direful inconveniences of their *own* too haſty Folly. So that in this ſenſe (at leaſt) our advantages, or expectations are but like graſs or a flower; for thoſe who ſpend madly in *hopes* of what they *ſhall* enjoy plentifully, dye *Beggars* commonly.

But ſay *this* be not the caſe. (For tho in this degenerate age, there are too many inſtances to prove the ruine

ine of fair Fortunes, even by *this* means, yet 'tis not always ſo, nor indeed is it *moſtly* ſo; yet) ſuppoſe then a Family as well *fix'd*, as they can be wiſhed for by their Friends, or themſelves deſire: ſay their circumſtances are ſuch, as puts them *beyond* the frowns of Fortune, and the *worſt* of miſchances ſhall not bring them to Neceſſity: Suppoſe them abounding with all conveniences and delights too, that they live in Wealth and Reputation, honoured and loved, in Health and Peace; that they have a numerous Progeny, which ſtand daily round their Tables like Olive plants, ſo that all that know them ſhall be forced to ſay; Lo! Here is *one* that is *truly* bleſſed, Yet alas how really *inconſiderable* are theſe things. *N. B.* If a Parent have but one fit of *ſickneſs*, theſe things are ſcarce *regarded*. A Dropſy, or the Gout, or a violent Headach makes all theſe ſeeming *ornaments* appear *invaluable*; and the reliſh which thoſe things afforded in health, becomes in a ſingle minute inſipid and contemptible.

But if *this* do not happen, or if a man don't perceive their vanity by ſome *inhabiliments* of body, or ſome ſudden diſcompoſure of *thoughts*, and anxieties of mind *during* life; yet in death all theſe fair enjoyments, are in the twinkling of an Eye rendred *uſeleſs*; — And yet he that hath at this preſent all that he can *wiſh* for, ſhall in a little time as ſurely be *deprived* of it, as he now *enjoys* it.

But ſuppoſe *this* don't firſt happen neither, (*i. e.*) ſuppoſe a Parent live a long time to enjoy what he hath (I mean, free from any perſonal troubles) yet if an *accident* (amidſt his Proſperity) happen to any of thoſe *things* which he calls *his own*, even *that* ſowers the *reſt* of his Enjoyments: *But* a ſickneſs in a Family, fills the reſt that are yet well with doubts and *fears*; but Death drives men to thoſe degrees of *Impatience*, which they would blame in others, and yet think they may juſtify in themſelves; or at leaſt lawfully permit. And yet after all Diſquietudes and Torments, the fate that hath befallen

them

them is *irreverſible*; and the remembrance of what they *had*, gives them a ſad conviction that 'twas not *laſting*; and the conſideration that they ſhall *no more* enjoy it, might inſtruct them too, that 'twas at beſt but like a *flower*: That, that ſhould not be *too much* prized, of which they might ſo many ways be deprived; That no wiſe man ſhould *glory* in that, of which ſo many caſualties might *rob* him; nor think himſelf much the *better* for that which he is ſure he can't *keep* long.

Secondly, We ſhould not too much addict our ſelves to this world. I allow and affirm 'tis every mans *duty* to manage that Fortune, with which God hath bleſt him, and to convey it as *entire* to his poſterity, as he received it from his predeceſſors. And he that doth not make *ſutable* proviſions for his Family, according to his *Quality*, is worſe than a Beaſt in any ſenſe, and in a religious one, worſe than an *Infidel*, 1 Tim. 5. 8. Which is ſomewhat to be conſidered by thoſe, who *frolick* away, not only their incomes, but their very *patrimony*; who revel to perpetual exceſs; who drown their own ſorrows in Wine *abroad*, when at the ſame time, their Wives and Families are forc'd to feed upon their own *tears* at home; ſuch there are, ſhame on them, who can ſo eaſily and incredibly cancel all the *Obligations* of Nature, and prove ſo unaccountably cruel to their own bowels, and yet put it off with a *Jeſt*; who ſquander away their eſtates, by Rioting and Drunkenneſs, by Folly and Madneſs; nay, who mortage their Reputation, and damn their Souls, only to pleaſe one *ſingle* ſenſe. And yet tell ſome of thoſe Fellows, how imprudent they act, or how unreaſonable it is, that one man ſhould ſo impoveriſh a Family to *future* generations; eſpecially that 'tis wonderfully unnatural to ſtarve his children at home, which could ſubſiſt with comfort, upon his *ſuperfluous* expences, all theſe perſwaſions are ſlighted, and in a contemptible ſort of way, ſome have anſwered, "Let that God who feedeth the *Inf.* 2.

" *Ravens*, provide for the *Rooks*. This is ſtupid wickedneſs, inferior to that of brute beaſts, and 'tis a *ſordid* temper, this therefore be ſure is not contained in the caution; 'Tis not *Care* that we condemn, but 'tis *too much*. N. B. The *neceſſary* parts of our duty, are thro a miſtake *ſtretched* too far, and by that means perverted from their original intent.

Becauſe every man muſt *improve* his Talent, which he hath received, therefore *ſome* think, that they muſt not allow any *relaxation*; But they labour hard, and fare hard; tire their bodies, and rack brains, how to encreaſe their wealth, and yet as their *riches* increaſe, ſo do their *deſires* too: And by how much the more they have, by ſo much the more are they covetous and greedy.

But *this* is to be *too much* addicted to the world, and this is that which by conſequence we condemn. *N. B.*

The reaſon why we ſhould take *ſome* care in the world, even for the things of the world, is, becauſe we do not know but we *may* need them; and God never allowed any body to be only an *idle* Spectator: and no body pretends to challenge to himſelf an immunity from all employments.

But if a man have nought to do, he is exceedingly more uneaſy than when ſurrounded with buſineſs; and it hath often puzzled many mens brains, how to diſpoſe of ſome of thoſe that they called *idle* hours: But now the reaſon, why we ſhould not ſpend *too much* time upon the things of this world, is, becauſe we can't tell how long we ſhall enjoy them.

I really believe, no man would much perplex himſelf about *fine* houſes, or new purchaſes, that was aſſured he ſhould dye within few months that he had *obtained* them; and yet *this* may be any mans fate; for the days of *every* man are but as *graſs*: and therefore methinks 'tis not only needleſs, but *madneſs*, to be very *ſollicitous* in getting that, of which we have no aſſurance that we

ſhall

ſhall keep it, but innumerable arguments to convince us, that we *muſt* (or at leaſt *may*) be deprived thereof in a ſmall time.

Now this caution of not being *too much* addicted to this world, is ſuppoſed to contain a twofold prohibition.

Firſt, With reſpect to thoſe things, that we are apt generally to account *neceſſary*: ſuch as are a *ſubſiſtence* for our ſelves, and a competency for *poſterity*. Even thoſe, I ſay, we muſt be careful not to extend beyond their proper limits; but we ought to *moderate* our deſires, by the rules of Chriſtian contentedneſs: as knowing that every thing beyond *conveniency*, is abſolutely *ſuperfluous*. And thoſe who have the *greateſt* eſtates, can only have but food and raiment; that the *reſt* is conſumed by Servants, or reſerved for *Strangers*, and it yields no other fruit than trouble or ſorrow; *trouble* to keep it, and *ſorrow* if it be loſt. But eſpecially he that is a great *admirer* of the World, is always unwilling to leave it; and yet ſo *fading* is his nature, that he can't long enjoy it; and therefore——from the uncertainty of our *retaining* the things of the world, we ought in prudence to *regulate* our longing after them; and becauſe we can't long *enjoy* them, we ſhould not much perplex ourſelves in their *purſuit*, or weary ourſelves in their acquiſition.

Secondly, But there is a *worſe* caſe yet, many devote themſelves to the world, upon no pretence of *neceſſity*, or convenience, but they rather become its *ſlaves*, and ſpend their whole time utterly in the *pleaſures* which it affords, and in purſuance of its airy vanities; But *this* the premiſes do *highly* condemn: For if the *uncertainty* of our Life be a *good* argument, to prevent too much care in *lawful* things, much more is it an argument to reſtrain us from thoſe practices, which are not *only* unlawful, but of *pernicious* conſequence. He that is born a man, and endowed with a rational Soul, ſhould conſider, that he hath *ſomething* elſe to do, than to live *meerly* to the fleſh:

that 'tis a very irrational method of *ſpending* his time, to conſume the whole of it upon his *worſer* part; The remembrance of what *little* ſatisfaction, he hath had in his former frolicks, might induce a man to think, that there is ſomewhat more *ſutable* to his excellent nature.

The beſt of all worldly *enjoyments*, if they *exceed* the Limit of Prudence and Sobriety, may be pleaſing for a time ('tis true) as long as men are *bereaved* of their ſences, through the height of Exceſs; (*which is juſt as diſtracted perſons reckon Fetters and Chains, an Ornament*) But alas! as ſoon as they *return* to themſelves, they find nothing but ſhame or ſickneſs; an aching Head, or a weak Stomach, or rotten Bones.

The *tranſporting* Pleaſures of a Frolick all vaniſh in a night; and all that remains is a *fear*, that others will *remember* the indecencies of which they were lately guilty and have *themſelves* forgotten.

Therefore I ſay, conſidering thoſe things are ſo truly *vanity*; that they are all tranſitory, which periſh in the uſing; that they are but imaginary *Apparitions*, and at beſt no *further* grateful than they are *fancied* to be ſo, it will follow, that they ſhould not be too *eagerly* courted, nor ſhould we ſpend *too much* time in their purchaſe.

Inſ. 3. Thirdly, Since our time here is ſo ſhort, and withal ſo uncertain, we ought to make *timely preparation* for our removal hence. *Mans days are but as Graſs*, conſume in a moment; our days are ſwifter than a Poſt; our time is but like a writing upon a ſand; and of this *every* one muſt needs be ſenſible, that ever looks abroad in the world; and yet there are not many that lay this to heart as they ought, nor do they conſider their *own* frailty, when they ſee others drop into their Graves.—It may be on a *Funeral day*, or on the news of ſuch a terrible miſchance and *fatal* accident as *this* was; men may have ſome natural ſuggeſtion that mortality is *certain*, and death amazing; But the next *merriment* wears off the

ſenſe

ſenſe of it, and men follow their accuſtomed ſports or buſineſs with as *much* eagerneſs, as if they ſhould *never* dye; and lay Scenes for ſtrange projects, as if they were *immortal:* and till they find themſelves *arreſted* by the Meſſenger of Death [a grievous ſickneſs] *they fancy it will always ſtand at a vaſt diſtance from them.* But this ſhould not be ſo;——we know we muſt remove off from this ſtage, and *for ought* we know the time is *nearer* than we are aware.

This Gentleman was as *likely* to live, as any perſon here now preſent; and yet within one hour that I ſaw him *lively* and well, I heard the *ſad* news of that accident which drew on death *irreſiſtably*, againſt all our good *wiſhes*, to the *ruine* of our hopes, and the *grief* of all Spectators. Nay the change was ſo *ſudden*, and withal ſo violent, that Art and Medicines were *uſeleſs*, and the *ready* offices of all his Friends, were utterly unſerviceable; but in a word, he was *ſtupid* in a moment, and continued ſo till he died, which was ſhortly afterward. And methinks this *ſingle* inſtance is enough to add *weight* to the Argument, and enforce the inference, (*viz.*) that all men ſhould provide in *ſeaſon* for a removal hence.

For who can tell, but the ſame or a like misfortune may befal *either* of us; (tho yet, I ſay, conſidering the circumſtances, they appear ſo amazing, that I heartily do, and every one may, pray, from ſuch a death good Lord *deliver* us.) But yet allowing only that a *ſudden* death is but barely *poſſible*; yet who in his wits would run the hazzard of a *following Eternity*, meerly for the Love of a fading, periſhing, tranſitory, uncertain world.

We muſt ſubſiſt, after our ſouls and bodies are ſeparated; and therefore we ought ſo to ſpend our time in the body, that it may turn to ſome account for our ſouls, after our bodies are turned to *duſt*; which I expreſs, by making a *timely preparation* for our removal.

There

There is no one thing in which men are ſo *contentedly* cheated, as in the notions of living and dying; nay *worſe*, thoſe who will not allow *others* to impoſe upon them, tho but to the damage of a *penny*, will yet impoſe upon *themſelves*, in this caſe, which is a matter of *infinite* importance: and many times hug their error ſo long, that it proves irrecoverably *damnable*, (*i. e.*) men drop into *Hell*, while they careſs themſelves with the *fond* hopes of a following Heaven.

And this is a madneſs which poſſeſſes the *generality* of all mankind; they put death and the other world at a *great diſtance*, and then think themſelves *ſafe* in all their extravagancies; there they revel their ſenſes; indulge to Luxury; make proviſion for the Fleſh; court the world; and make but a *ſport* of damnation.

And yet all this while, are confident, that they ſhall have time enough to *reverſe* all this; and *meet* Death long enough e're it call for them: ——— And that after a life of *ſin* and vanity, they ſhall dye very devout *Saints*, and partake of their Bleſſedneſs.

Unaccountable ſtupidity! What is this that ſo *bewitcheth* men! What *Circæan* Cup ſhould have power ſufficient ſo to *intoxicate* them! And ſo utterly to diveſt them of their Senſe and Reaſon! Nay what *Amulet* is that, which can ſo powerfully *reſiſt* the Force and Charms of the principles of Religion! and make them ſo *regardleſs* of another world! to which yet they may be *tranſported*, for ought they know, in the ſpace of *one* hour.

There are many who have ſerved this World with the *ſame zeal*; coveted wealth with as *much* greedineſs; indulged themſelves with as much *liberty*; carried themſelves upon their *appendant* ornaments with as *much ſtate*; in a word, that ſinned as *boldly*, and yet with the comfort of the ſame *ſecurity*, in *former* days, that men do *now*:—And yet many of us can tell how *ſhort* they fell

in

in their expectations; that they died in the *habit* of ſin, where there have been no *appearances* of any colour of repentance; and ſome in the very *act*, where *Charity* it ſelf can hardly ſuppoſe it; at leaſt, I'm ſure Reaſon will not *allow* it.

In a word, we have known ſome that have died in ſuch a condition, as conſidering the circumſtances, and with reference to the *next* world, I'm ſure no man preſent would be content to dye in the *ſame condition* for ten thouſand worlds.

Well: Allow this; but conſider, if we uſe *ſuch* practices, why may not we fear the *ſome* end: In ſuch a caſe fear is *beneficial*; and foreſight is greatly advantageous; and therefore we ſhould prepare in *ſeaſon* for our removal hence.

'Tis a fatal *deluſion* to reſerve the practice of piety to the *latter* part of our lives: 'Tis an affront to God, that we ſhould *ſin away* our Youth, our Strength, and our Vigour, and at laſt bring him the *lame* offering of a decrepit old age, which is rendred uſeleſs to our ſelves, thrô the frequent *debaucheries* of Youth, which no arguments could prevent: Briefly; Nothing can be ſaid to juſtify thoſe, who believe a *future* ſtate, and yet all the time which they live here, make no *proviſion* for it. (For I reckon *future* reſolutions to be nothing but a trick to ſilence their conſciences in this world; though even thoſe will render all *reſolving* penitents inexcuſable in the next, at the day of Judgment.)

Now when I ſay, we muſt make a timely preparation for our removal hence, I mean two things.

1. *Parents* muſt take care to educate their Children well; (expreſſed in the order of celebrating the Marriage in our Church, by) bringing them up in the *fear*, and nurture of the Lord; And *Solomon*, *Prov.* 22. 6. calls it, *training up a Child in the way that he ſhould go.* There is nothing

nothing ſo much conduces to the making a *timely* preparation for our removal hence, as doth a *vertuous* education.

When Children in their *tender* age, are accuſtomed to have an *horror* of any thing that is evil, that grows (with their age) into a perfect *antipathy*. And when they are only *timely* warned that lying, ſwearing, *&c.* will carry them to *Hell*, when they dye, *this* will imprint ſuch terrible apprehenſions of *damnation* upon their memories, as no *Device* of the Devil or his inſtruments, can ever *deface*;——men ſo ſeaſoned with arguments from *terror*, are *proof* againſt charms; and they will be afraid to do *wickedly*, becauſe they know the end will be *Damnation*.

† Oh! How happy would it be, if *all Parents* would but take this care!

† Methink this ſhould no more be a ſcandal; than it would be an affront to wiſh all men Saints.

But alas! Where is this almoſt to be met with? thoſe who are extremely *nice* of every thing that relates to the *bodily* health, and welfare *temporal* of their Children, inſomuch that (as we ſay) a Fly muſt not pitch on them, and think them extreamly injured by any body, that offers but to *contradict* them, in every little *impertinent* humour,——Yet thoſe *very* perſons can be content to hear thoſe very *beloved* Children, ſwear as *ſoon* almoſt as they can ſpeak, and lye *accuſtomedly*, and miſ-call and curſe their Play-mates, and yet at all this to be *unconcerned*: And in all this the Child muſt be *humoured* (forſooth) or his Spirits will be broken, though *God* be diſhonoured, and his Laws trampled under foot.

But alas! Whatever thoſe *fond* Parents may think, I know that this comes up *full* to *Ely*'s ſin, 1 *Sam.* 2. 29. who honoured his Sons above God. For ſo thoſe, out of a damnable Folly *ruine* their Children, only out of a fear, that

that they ſhould ruine them, by *reſtraining* them.

I will never perſwade Parents to be *hard hearted*, or unnatural; But I ſay, if a *Child* do any thing that is evil, correct him how *young* ſoever; but do it with that *Prudence*, that the violence do not exceed his ſtrength; Leſt you prove a *Murtherer* inſtead of a *Reformer*. 'Tis ſaid by a *wiſe* man, *Prov.* 23, 13, 14. *With-hold not correction from the Child: N. B. for if thou beateſt him with a rod, he ſhall not dye: Thou ſhalt beat him with a rod, and ſhalt deliver his Soul from Hell.* N. B. For thoſe *little* puniſhments in *tender* years, and before cuſtom hath ſuperinduced an *habit*, will create an abſolute *averſneſs* to all iniquity.

And therefore, I ſay, that thoſe who have the care of Children committed to them, if they do not *reſtrain* them from ſin as often as they find them guilty, either by *Correction* or *Reproof*, do what in them lies, to *betray* them over to Hell: And though the *Indiſcretion* and invincible Ignorance of thoſe Minors may in ſome meaſure excuſe them from the *formality* of the guilt, provided they dye in their *tender* age (*i.e.*) before they are come to weigh things according to their nature, or make a *difference* between good and evil; yet ſure, this *Indulgence* of Parents, Maſters or Guardians, can never be excuſed, nor will God let it paſs *unpuniſhed*.

But then, if Children be *allowed* to ſwear, *&c.* when *young*, and afterward grow up to age, and ſet abroad in the world, and meet with ſuch variety of temptations, 'tis then no wonder to hear that ſuch are *incredibly* debaucht. For when thoſe who had no *reſtraints* in their *Infancy*, nor no *Curb* in their Youth, meet with old Practitioners in Wickedneſs, they don't come like *Tinder* to a Spark of Fire, but rather they *themſelves* are all on a *Flame*, and want nothing but the *mode* of the times to be *compleatly* wicked; which in the more *modern* Language is (tho damnable yet) gentile.

Now, whatever you may *think* of this, I assure you 'tis a *fatal* truth: And I have heard of, and know those, whose Parents have *allowed* them (when *Children*) to practice *constantly* those several wickednesses, which men of *Age* ought to be ashamed of.——that when a *Boy* of ten or twelve years old, hath been able to swear briskly; lye fluently, or talk to his elders *saucily*, with a little mixture of *Railery*; and to the Female sex a story of *bawdy* obscenity: In a word, if he have been able to play the *Buffoon* wittily, and act a *Merry-Andrew* with an air, he hath been as much *admired*, and commended, as if he understood all the *depths* of Learning, whether natural or Theological.

And then pray, what *hopes* that such an one should ever restrain *himself* when abroad? Parents (naturally) have some awful influence upon their Children; and it must be a *Rape* and violence to their natures, to erase the apprehensions of it on *either* side. But sin is of a *levelling* nature: and the greatest *contrarieties* agree, and the most distant contradictions are *reconciled*, to make a Conspiracy in wickedness.

But I say, those who thus set up in the world (as I may say) *Licentiates* in Iniquity, they generally grow from sin to sin, and never *dream* of a Judgment to come. ——And no wonder, for they never *heard* of such a thing. For we can't suppose that ever such *Gallants* should go to a *Church*, or look in a *Bible*, or read a good *Book*, or hear a *Sermon*: Alas! No: That's none of their Employment, they have no *president* for so doing, their Fathers never did *so* before them, and therefore they scorn to begin.

Miserable *condition* that these *men* are in! they *never* had any *acquaintance* with Religion, and which is the *worst*, of their case, their Consciences were *stupified*, before they knew the *voice* of their admonitions!

And

And thus must they *perish* eternally, except a *Miracle* of mercy interpose for their rescue; and that too, such a miracle as must come *unaskt*, for such men (as I am mentioning) know no other use of the name of God, than to *profane* it by an horrid Oath, or interlert it with some impertinent or *causeless* curse.

And how *far*, such as these are from *Destruction*, let all men consider: and yet through *whose* occasion let the world judge.

But now in short, positively: *Parents* should provide for their Children, in this respect, *seasonably*, by giving them good *instructions*, *enlivened* by their own Examples. *N. B.*

They must reprove them for *little* faults, and correct them for *great* ones; they must keep them to the *strict* observance of the rules of good Morality; and the *exactions* which Parents, *&c.* should demand from their Children in point of practice, must be *severe* (*i. e.*) admit of no diminutions: There must be no *Commutation* in the exercise of *tender vertue*; for *that* will by degrees tempt *Children* to believe that 'tis only *indifferent*.

But now when Parents keep a severe hand, and a watchful Eye over their Children, and will allow no *abatements* of their duty: but encourage and reward them for doing *well*; and render Vertue *amiable* from the consideration of that *credit* that attends it; and Lastly, when they recommend *Religion* to their choice from the consideration.

1. *That Gods Honor is concerned in it*
2. *That their own eternal Happiness depends on it*; then Parents have done their *duty* for their Children.

Secondly, And then there is no *doubt*, that those who have begun thus *well*, will ever fall *back*; those who are

ſo forward in their way to Heaven, can't fail of *arriving* thither with eaſe and comfort, as well as be received with joy and *glory*. He that hath been *accuſtomed* to do well, will not admit of any temptation to *biaſs* him: but his whole converſation will be heavenly: his diſcourſe alway *grave*, as if ſeaſoned with Salt, miniſtring *Grace* to the Hearers: his thoughts alway *limited*; his deſires *bounded*; and his actions will be ſo *innocent*, and withal his temper ſo *obliging*, and his *ſociety* ſo acceptable, and withal ſo *beneficial*, that *all* that know him muſt commend him.

And *which* is a comfort to *himſelf*, he is alway in readineſs for the coming of the Bridegroom.

Preparation for death includes more than a *Death-bed-repentance*; or a faint Lord have mercy upon me. *He* properly, and he *only* prepares for death *aright*, who lives every *day* with that care and watchfulneſs, as if he were to dye e're the *night* (*i. e.*) not to fall willfully into any *notorious* ſin, nor to *allow* little ones: but every night confeſſes the Errors and Miſcarriages of the day *paſt*, and endeavours what he can to *avoid* the ſame in after times: In a word: 'Tis an *Early* beginning to *live* well, that can be truly accounted a *timely preparation* for our removal hence. *N. B.*

Inf. 4. Fourthly, We ſhould moderate our ſorrow for the loſs of any Friend, how near or hopeful ſoever. *The days of man are but as graſs*, ſays the text. *All Fleſh is graſs*, ſaith the Prophet, *Iſay* 40. 6. *and all the glory of it but like a Flower*: well then——Are you diſcontented that your graſs withereth? Or are you perplexed that a flower fadeth? No.

This doth not diſturb you, for you know 'tis *natural*. Be it ſo; mans days are no *more*; but his removal hence is *neceſſary*; and will you, will you, it lies not in your power to *prevent* that fate, for that's a war in which there's

there's no diſcharge. And therefore to be *angry* that our Friends *dye*, is to *blame* the wiſdom of God, who made them *mortal* : or to be diſcontented that we can keep them no longer, is to pretend to tell God, what ſeaſon is proper for him to do what *we* would have done, which is to put our ſelves above him: In a word, we have no more *ſolid* reaſon to be grieved that our Friends dye (I mean grief to exceſs) than that a Stone deſcends ; or Water is moiſt ; or the Sun giveth light, or Fire burns ; for all are alike natural.

But it may be ſaid, if ever grief be allowed, when our Friends dye, as Nature *prompts* it, and there are not many who can conquer their paſſion ſo as to ſuppreſs it ; then in *extraordinary* caſes, it will follow that there ſhould be *extraordinary* grief allowed ? (will it not ? may be a Queſtion)

I anſwer, no: or I ask to what *purpoſe* ? will your Friend be the more *eaſy* after he is dead, if you tear your Hair, or rent your Cloths, or break your Reſt, or forbear your Meat, and pine your ſelf into a Conſumption ? If you you can think ſo ; ſpare no Labour, but rather take *incentives* to heighten a diſconſolate paſſion to any degree, *this ſide* your own expiration.—But if you can't ſuppoſe that the deceaſed Perſon, for whom you ſo lament, and whom you ſo paſſionately bewail, is at all *benefited* thereby, pray then to what *purpoſe* is it ? Or why make ye this ado.—I am ſure, it can be no *comfort* or eaſe to indulge thoſe phlegmatick paſſions: reaſon doth not *require* them, nor religion tolerate them :—Or if no other argument can *convince* men, how *unſerviceable* exceſſive grief is, in ſuch a caſe, I ſay, that others ſhall ſhortly lament *us*, as *we* now do our late dear Friend.

In a word, therefore in all the circumſtances of Life, let our grief be moderate ; in all our concerns of *Eternity*, let us be very *vigilant* : Let it be our care to have Oyl *Summ. & Appl.*

alway,

alway in our Lamps. We are but as *Flowers*; we know not how *ſoon* we may be gathered hence; let us be careful that we be not found *unprovided*.

If God ſhould think fit to call us off ſuddenly, are we now *provided*?—I know many don't care to put this queſtion much to themſelves: but they would rather enquire after *others* that died in this manner: but *that* is not any mans duty, for any one to mind *more* than himſelf, for himſelf. But this I know, and forwarn, and teſtify, (*viz.*) that where God continues the means of grace, and makes all men a *free* offer of glory, if they will but *labour* after it; If men will prefer a Luſt to Eternal Life: Value Vanity beyond a Crown of Glory, prize a Bubble before an Inheritance which fadeth not away; if they ſlight the Threatnings of God; and contemn his Judgments, and deſpiſe his Mercies, he will ſpeedily execute Vengeance on thoſe that ſo affront him. And thô their time in *general* be but *ſhort*, yet God will cut off ſuch in the *midſt* of their days, haſten their Deſtruction, and ſend them quick into Hell; and then they ſhall too late perceive their Folly, which now they would not ſuſpect.

On the other hand. If from the conſideration of the *uncertainty* of our continuance here, we *provide* our ſelves for a *removal*; and make it our buſineſs to look out that *City, which hath Foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God*, Heb. 11. 10. If from the thoughts of a *ſpeedy* death, we are perſwaded to mortify ſin in our members *preſently*; if from the remembrance of leaving *this* world, we are induced to fix our thoughts upon *Heaven*; If the thoughts of leaving behind us all *our Friends*, engage us to make Friends with the Mammon of *Unrighteouſneſs*; If the leaving our *wealth*, prevails upon us to lay up a *treaſure* in Heaven.

Then

Then have we lived *long* enough, how *little while* ſoever we have lived; then death ſhall never be *ſudden*, how *unexpected* ſoever it may *ſeize* us. Laſtly, then our bounty, our honour and ſplendor, which are ſo many *Flowers* on us in Life, of which death deprives us, ſhall be all *abundantly* recompenced by a *Crown* of Righteouſneſs; which ſhall be a laſting *ornament* to our head, to a never ending Eternity.

FINIS.